From: Simmons, Denise
To: Sergio Finkielsztein
Subject: Re: Cambridge City Council Resolution to Boycott HP
Date: Tuesday, April 17, 2018 7:05:01 PM

Dear Mr. Finkielsztein,

Thank you for your email. So far, I have not yet seen an actual draft of the proposed resolution asking the City to cease purchasing HP equipment and supplies. I understand there's been a great deal of concern in the community about this matter – yet I must underscore that this will only appear on the City Council's April 23 agenda if one or more City Councilors sponsor it. We will not know if it is on the agenda until either a City Councilor publicly declares that they'll be sponsoring this (to my knowledge, this has not happened), or until the agenda is finalized by the Clerk's Office and posted online this Thursday evening around 5:30 pm. I can, at the very least, confirm that *I* am not a sponsor of such a resolution.

There have been numerous op-eds, emails, and social media posts condemning the City Council for rushing this to a vote without adequate opportunities for the public to weigh in, or even giving people a chance to read the resolution. Some people have condemned the City Council for seemingly being on the brink of passing this resolution, or for seemingly being on the brink of rejecting it. While I understand the passion behind this matter, I must clarify that we do not yet even have a resolution or policy order in front of us, there has been absolutely no debate about this amongst the City Councilors, and the City Council will not have an opportunity to discuss this amongst ourselves unless and until a resolution is sponsored by at least one of us and introduced at a public meeting. At this point, I am not yet certain if such a resolution will be introduced or not.

I appreciate your reaching out and sharing your views on this. I am currently reading up on this issue to be better informed, I am reviewing all the emails and letters coming in about this issue, and I am reaching out to our representatives in Congress to seek their input on an issue that is more international than municipal in scope. Should this matter end up on before the City Council – either on April 23 or at a later date – I will look forward to engaging in a thoughtful discussion and debate with my colleagues on the Council and then seeing how to best resolve this matter in a way that allows everyone to feel they have had a fair chance to be heard. Thank you.

E. Denise Simmons

From: Sergio Finkielsztein <Sergiof@webmpt.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 17, 2018 9:09 AM
To: Simmons, Denise
Subject: Cambridge City Council Resolution to Boycott HP

Dear Cambridge Council Member Simmons,

As a resident of the commonwealth of Massachusetts I find the upcoming resolution vote

against Hewlett Packard very concerning for the following reasons:

1) Singling Out Israel and Holding It to a Unique Ethical Standard Would Raise Troubling Questions

Even were we to assume (and we don't) that everything Israel's detractors say is true, why would the Cambridge City Council choose to single out HP and Israel? There are literally thousands of American companies that are working overseas and engaged in transactions that could be tied to questionable human rights practices. Energy companies like Aramco in Saudi Arabia (persecution of religious minorities, women and members of the LGBTQ community); technology and consumer companies like Apple and Foxconn with China (child and slave labor); US corporations and investors providing major investment in Duterte's Philippines (extrajudicial killings, children's rights violations, attacks on journalists, human trafficking); destruction of indigenous habitats in Brazil by international and U.S. mining and farming interests. This list could fill pages, including numerous companies with Cambridge contacts.

It would be one thing if the Cambridge City Council elected to adopt a foreign policy that it applied without prejudice to nations and companies around the world. In this instance, however, it is overlooking scores of other situations far more troubling than the worst accusations made against Israel and electing to support dubious and largely unexamined claims made by an outside organization. The circumstances invite troubling speculation as to why Israel is being held to an ethical standard that the Cambridge City Council holds to no others, including itself.

As *New York Times* columnist Thomas Friedman explains, "Criticizing Israel is not anti-Semitic, and saying so is vile. But singling out Israel for opprobrium and international sanction out of all proportion to any other party in the Middle East is anti-Semitic, and not saying so is dishonest."

2) The Cambridge City Council Would Hold Israel to a Standard That It Does Not Apply to Itself

On September 11, 2017, the Cambridge City Council issued a policy order declaring that "the City of Cambridge and the City of Dongguan [China] would mutually benefit from promoting contact between our governments, non-profits, business and research and educational institutions...." It turns out that even a cursory investigation would have revealed that Dongguan is a toy manufacturing center that has produced toys for Disney, Mattel and others in factories that, according to China Labor Watch, allow a wide range of labor rights violations. These have included mandatory overtime, wages below the legal minimum, unpaid overtime wages, unpaid insurance, harsh and high-pressure working conditions, poor living conditions, and abusive management. But, the Cambridge City Council said nothing about this in its policy order. It ignored well documented human rights concerns, welcomed a special relationship

and to date has not proposed a boycott of products made in Dongguan factories, which may find their way into Cambridge Schools and elsewhere. Regrettably, there are other examples of the City Council's moral myopia. And together these situations deepen the question as to why Israel alone is to be singled out by the Cambridge City Council without even a modest effort to understand the underlying issues or protect fundamental due process.

If these reasons alone are not compelling enough, perhaps consider the fact that BDS initiatives have been rejected by national and Massachusetts leaders, including Barack Obama, Bernie Sanders, Keith Ellison, Cory Booker, John Kerry, Ed Markey, Elizabeth Warren, Michael Capuano, Joe Kennedy, Deval Patrick and scores more prominent national leaders, including governors of all 50 states.

I urge you to please consider the ramifications of your decision and vote no to Cambridge City Council Resolution to Boycott HP.

Regards,

Sergio Finkielsztein